

In the nearly fifty years that Mr. Blackburn has had a significant hand in the hospital's operations, Bedford Memorial has become a driving force of health care in Bedford County.

Mr. Blackburn has served this nation honorably, touching the lives of every American citizen through his service in the United States Army Air Corps during World War II. Having taken the reigns as a strong leader since his youth, he has been a pillar of strength within his community, and his ceaseless dedication to the health care system is unparalleled. His uncompromising sense of duty to the community in which he lives has been a source of inspiration, and the impact he has had is immeasurable.

For his incomparable generosity, service to the Bedford Memorial Hospital, and unabated commitment to excellence, John Blackburn, Jr. deserves the highest recognition. He has demonstrated enthusiasm and care for the county which he has served, and his spirit and dedication have infiltrated his every action. The legacy he has created is one that every American should emulate, and his contributions will not go unnoticed by the business for which he worked nor the community in which he lives. I would like to congratulate Mr. Blackburn on his many accomplishments, and I wish him the best of luck in his retirement.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DR. DAVID N. MESCHES

**HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 17, 2004*

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the distinguished career of Dr. David N. Mesches. Since 1961, Dr. Mesches has provided outstanding medical care to the residents of Ulster County and he has worked tirelessly to improve the delivery of health care services not only in Ulster County, but also throughout the Hudson Valley. I am pleased to join the health care community, his family and his friends in honoring Dr. Mesches for his outstanding career.

During his four decades of practice in Ulster County, Dr. Mesches has served as Captain in the United States Air Force at Stewart Air Force Base, providing care to servicemen and their families; operated a private practice while serving as Director of the Student Health Center at SUNY New Paltz; served as Director of the Mid-Hudson Rural Family Practice Residency Training Program; and currently, is the Chief Executive Officer of the Mid-Hudson Family Health Institute.

Dr. Mesches' membership in a number of medical and scientific societies and committees is a testament to his dedication and desire to provide citizens with the best possible healthcare available. In fact, in his current role as the President and CEO of the Mid-Hudson Family Health Institute, Dr. Mesches has increased access to healthcare for the under-insured and uninsured residents of the Hudson Valley by forging strong alliances. Through his efforts, regional health care agencies have begun to work collaboratively to build a seamless, integrated healthcare delivery system that will effectively be able to identify and address the needs of the most at risk member of our community.

In addition to his professional achievements, Dr. Mesches has participated in numerous community activities including, serving as the Chairman of the Ulster County and New Paltz Planning Boards and Ulster County Planned Parenthood, and serving on the Board of Directors of Patterns for Progress, Mid-Hudson Savings Bank, First Union Bank, and Atlantic States Mortgage Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of Dr. David Mesches. His commitment to improving the lives of people around him has yielded a distinguished record of service and has made Ulster County and much of the Hudson Valley a better, healthier place to live.

TRIBUTE TO TAIWAN PRESIDENT  
CHEN SHUI-BIAN

**HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 17, 2004*

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, last week I had the opportunity of visiting Taiwan, the Republic of China and I was very impressed with what I saw. Taiwan has clearly grown to be a modern democracy and its people are well educated and prosperous. The people whom I talked to were all friendly toward us and supportive of our global war against terrorism.

In fact, I was most impressed with Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian. This young statesman was reelected president of the Republic of China last March and was inaugurated on May 20. In my conversation with him, he said again and again that he is seeking a genuine dialogue with the leaders of the People's Republic of China. He said Taiwan does not seek confrontation but a friendly dialogue with mainland China leading to talks on all issues. President Chen would like to see more cooperation and less confrontation in dealing with mainland China leaders. In addition to its "relationship" with mainland China, President Chen considers Taiwan's relations with the U.S. a matter of utmost importance and he would like to see further strengthening of this relationship. I personally believe that Taiwanese people are truly lucky to have President Chen as their leader for the next four years.

I am delighted that Taiwan is now ably represented in Washington by its young and energetic ambassador, Dr. David Lee. Ambassador Lee knows Washington well and he will most certainly strengthen the ever-growing bonds between Taipei and Washington. Taiwan and the United States, I wish to assure both President Chen and Ambassador Lee, have always stood together shoulder to shoulder and will always remain strong partners in maintaining peace and stability.

I had a good visit to Taiwan and I hope my colleagues and my fellow countrymen will follow my steps in visiting this beautiful island of freedom and prosperity soon and often.

IN HONOR OF JULIE PACKARD

**HON. SAM FARR**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 17, 2004*

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my dear friend Julie E. Packard, the Executive Director and Vice Chairman of the Monterey Bay Aquarium Foundation's Board of Trustees and the recipient of the Ted Danson Ocean Hero Award. The award is given annually, in recognition of the recipient's strong commitment toward protection and restoration of the marine environment. Ms. Packard is a woman of principle and conviction. She has worked tirelessly to protect and preserve our delicate ocean ecology.

On October 20, 1984, Ms. Packard was instrumental in opening the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Today, the Monterey Bay Aquarium Foundation is a \$124 million institution and has consistently drawn 2 million people to its exhibits each year. It and its sister institution, the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, are some of the finest marine life and ocean science research institutions in the United States. She has been its Executive Director since it opened.

Ms. Packard was born in Los Altos, California. She is one of four children, along with a brother, David, and sisters, Susan and Nancy. She went on to earn a masters degree in biology from the University of California at Santa Cruz. Julie is married to Robert Stephens. Together they are raising wonderful twin daughters.

Through her involvements, Julie has inspired and educated many about the wonders of our oceans and the environment of Monterey Bay and the central coast. She has been instrumental in making the schools of Monterey Bay some of the finest on the central coast, making it possible for future generations of students to nourish a passion for the ocean as strong as hers.

Ms. Packard has been a board member of numerous organizations and committees, including the California Nature Conservancy, the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. She was also a member of the Pew Oceans Commission in 2003, which issued recommendations for a comprehensive overhaul of national ocean policy. Ms. Packard has also received numerous awards. Perhaps one of the milestones of Julie's life and work with the oceans is when she received the Audubon Medal for Conservation in 1998, one of the premier recognitions given to those in this field.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I would like to honor the many accomplishments of my friend Julie E. Packard and express sincere gratitude for her accomplishments and contributions to our community.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO RICK  
HANSON

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 17, 2004*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Rick Hanson, a strong-willed individual